

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 13697 291135Z

42

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 13697

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: INITIAL REPLACEMENTS FOR MAJOR PURGE VICTIMS ANNOUNCED

REF: MANILA 13542

SUMMARY: OVER WEEKEND GOP ANNOUNCED FIRST CABINET AND SUB-CABINET LEVEL APPOINTMENTS TO FILL POSITIONS VACATED BY ONGOING PURGE. REPLACEMENTS INCLUDE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS, PLUS COMMISSIONERS OF BUDGET, INTERNAL REVENUE, AUDIT AND CUSTOMS. EMPHASIS HAS BEEN ON TECHNOCRATIC CREDENTIALS, BUT MAJORITY OF APPOINTMENTS ARE ACTING AND FINAL JUDGMENT ON QUALITY OF NEW MEN NOT YET POSSIBLE. MEANWHILE, PURGE IS CONTINUING. ACCORDING PRESS, GOAL OF 2,000 FIRINGS ALREADY REACHED, BUT MILITARY UNTOUCHED SO FAR. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ARE FIRST APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED:

A. ALFREDO JUINIO (CURRENTLY DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL IRRIGATION AUTHORITY) AS ACTING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 13697 291135Z

VICE CONSUNHI. AGED IN MID-FORTIES, JUINIO IS DEAN OF

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AT UNIVERSITY OF PHILIPPINES AND IS WELL REGARDED BY USAID COUNTERPARTS. HIS APPOINTMENT LIKELY TO BE PERMANENT SINCE FOLLOWING CREATION OF HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT, THERE IS LITTLE LEFT IN PUBLIC WORKS PORTFOLIO EXCEPT WATER RESOURCES ENGINEERING, IN WHICH FIELD HE IS HIGHLY QUALIFIED.

B. ALFREDO PIO DE RODA (CURRENTLY ACTING SECRETARY OF FINANCE) AS ACTING COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, VICE GEOTINA. DE RODA IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY DUE TO PROMINENT ROLE HE HAS PLAYED IN TAX AND TEXTILE NEGOTIATIONS. IN VIEW OF OTHER HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH ARE MORE TO HIS TASTE, IT STRIKES US AS MOST UNLIKELY THAT HIS APPOINTMENT TO CUSTOMS JOB WILL BE PERMANENT.

C. ASSOCIATE JUSTICE EFREN PLANA (COURT OF APPEALS AND CONCURRENTLY UNDERSECRETARY OF JUSTICE) AS ACTING COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE VICE MISAEL VERA. BORN IN 1928, PLANA WAS GOVERNMENT PROSECUTOR IN FAMOUS STONEHILL CASE AND HAS SERVED AS UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE. HE WAS RECENTLY ON LAUREL-LANGLEY NEGOTIATING PANEL WHERE HE DID NOT RPT NOT PLAY PROMINENT ROLE. HE IS REGARDED BY EMBASSY AS CAPABLE OFFICIAL. HE IS BROTHER OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, JOSE PLANA (BUT IS SIGNIFICANTLY EASIER TO WORK WITH AND FAR MORE DYNAMIC THAN THE LATTER).

D. DEAN JAIME C. LAYA (CURRENTLY DEAN OF UP BUSINESS SCHOOLN DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY -- NEDA -- AND DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK) AS ACTING COMMISSIONER OF BUDGET. LAYA, BORN 1939, IS A WELL-KNOWN AND HIGHLY REGARDED TECHNOCRAT. HE WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO UNLOAD SOME OF HIS CURRENT ABUNDANCE OF JOBS, BUT TOLD EMBOFF HE DOESN'T YET KNOW WHICH HE WILL RETAIN. LAYA'S APPOINTMENT MAY BE TEMPORARY SINCE MELCHOR IMPLIED TO ECON/COMM COUNSELLOR THAT HE HAS DOUBTS ABOUT LAYA'S SUITABILITY FOR BUDGET JOB.)

E. ASSOCIATE JUSTICE FRANCISCO S. TANTUICO (CURRENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 13697 291135Z

ON COURT OF APPEALS) AS CHAIRMAN OF COMMISSION ON AUDIT, VICE MATHAY. FORTY-FOUR YEARS OLD AND ONE OF YOUNGEST MEMBERS OF CUURT OF APPEALS, HE WAS FORMERLY WITH COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE IN TACLOBAN, LEYTE, AND IS INTIMATE OF ROMUALDEZ (MRS. MARCOS) FAMILY. DURING A RECENT SIX-YEAR STINT AS JUDGE IN CEBU, HE WAS, ACCORDING SOME SOURCES, ACTIVE IN PROMOTING ROMUALDEZJ INTERESTS THERE. NEVERTHELESS, HE IS RESPECTED PROFESSIONAL KNOWN AS A

"GOOD, FAIR" JUDGE.

2. PRESS CONTINUES TO PRINT NAMES OF ADDITIONAL PURGEES. PRESIDENT HAS NOW ALLEGEDLY EXCEEDED TARGET OF "2,000 UNDESIRABLES" SLATED FOR REMOVAL IN SEPT. 19 SPEECH. (PRESS DIFFERS AS TO EXACT NUMBER ACTUALLY FIRED, WITH 2,091 AND 2,096 FIGURES CITED BY "BULLETIN TODAY" AND "ORIENT NEWS" RESPECTIVELY.) MANY OF PURGEES ARE SIMPLE DRIVERS, CLERKS, ETC. ALL ACCOUNTS AGREE THAT "CLEANUP" NOT YET OVER.

3. IN SEPT. 27 CONVERSATION WITH ECON/COMM COUNSELLOR, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MELCHOR STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT HIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF PURGE SPADEWORK, AS WELL AS FOR SUBSEQUENT RECRUITMENT OF REPLACEMENTS, WITH SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS BY PRESIDENT MARCOS (E.G., HIS ADDITION OF CUSTOMS BOSS GEOTINA AND DELETION OF AG SECRETARY Tanco FROM DRAFT PURGE LIST). ASKED ABOUT CRITERIA FOR RECRUITMENT, MELCHOR SAID PRESIDENT HAS ORDERED NATION-WIDE TALENT HUNT FOR QUALIFIED PEOPLE WITH MINIMUM PAST OR PRESENT ASSOCIATION WITH MILITARY.

4. COMMENT: GENERAL THRUST OF COMMENTS REFTEL STILL APPLIES. QUALITY OF FIRST NEW APPOINTEES IS IMPRESSIVE, BUT ALL OF SENIOR MEN EXCEPT ONE (TANTUICO) ARE AS YET SERVING TEMPORARILY. THAT PURGE IS CAUSING REAL DISMAY AMONG ESTABLISHMENT MAY BE INDICATED BY FACT THAT COLUMNIST VALENCIA IS EMERGING AS CHAMPION OF THE UNJUSTLY SEVERED (TODAY'S COLUMN URGES JUSTICE FOR LOWLY CLERK WITH COMMON NAME WHO MAY HAVE BEEN FIRED DUE TO BUREAUCRATIC SLIP). IMPACT OF ONE OF MOST PRAISEWORTHY REMOVALS, THAT OF HIGHWAY SECRETARY BALHAZAR AQUINO, HAS BEEN SLIGHTLY DILUTED BY SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MANILA 13697 291135Z

HE WILL STAY ON UNTIL HE REACHES RETIREMENT AGE OF 65 IN JANUARY.

5. WE STILL HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON TIMING OR EXTENT OF MILITARY PURGE. HOWEVER, DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENTS IN ENRILE CASE (SEPTTEL) ARE INCREASING SPECULATION THAT THERE WILL BE REAL ACTION IN THIS AREA AS WELL.

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